

THE Newman

THE JOURNAL OF THE NEWMAN ASSOCIATION

January 2020

Issue No. 109

£5.00

A portrait of Bernard Robinson, an elderly man with white hair, wearing a dark suit and a white clerical collar. The portrait is set within a decorative red and gold frame that resembles a book cover or a religious icon. The background of the cover is a photograph of a church interior with a red and gold altar cloth and two lit candles in ornate holders.

CELEBRATING THE CANONISATION
Reports from Rome and home

Bernard Robinson

The Last Supper and the Eucharist

John Duddington

Human Rights and the Church

Edward Echlin

Being a Christian Today

Coming events of 2020
Update on CIO proposals

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Editorial Committee: Barry Riley (Editor) • Anne Duddington • John Duddington • Josephine Way • Robert Williams • Dr. Marie Rose Low • Dr. Christopher Quirke

Printing: Silver Pines Services, Sevenoaks

Articles, comments, etc.: Should be sent to Barry Riley by email at editor@newman.org.uk – items should be sent in Word format as an attachment or as an embedded text within the email. Hard-copy items may be sent by post to 17 Mount Pleasant Road, London W5 1SG. Tel: 020 8998 5829. Articles should not normally exceed 3,000 words.

Copy Deadline: for the next issue is **March 15th**.

The Newman: is published by the Newman Association, Registered Office: Suite 1, 3rd Floor, 11-12 St James Square, London SW1Y 4LB. **Website:** <http://www.newman.org.uk>. Unless the Editor is informed in advance that contributors wish to refuse permission for online use of their material, The Newman Association may use on its website any article or other material contributed to *The Newman*. Unless the article has been previously published elsewhere with copyright assigned, copyright will reside with the author, The Newman and the Newman Association. In this case an author may republish his or her material elsewhere with the permission of the Association and printed acknowledgement of its prior appearance in *The Newman*.

Email: info@newman.org.uk

British Library Reference Number: ISSN-0951-5399

Back numbers: copies of a number of previous issues of *The Newman* are available from the editor - see contact details above.

The Newman Association Charity No. 1006709

President: Winifred Flanagan

Acting Hon. Secretary: Brian Hamill, 25 Cyprus Mount, Wakefield WF1 2RJ, Tel. 01924 365779 to whom general enquiries should be addressed.



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Cover picture: *A picture of the new saint displayed in St Peter's Basilica in October 2019*

Comment

In the aftermath of last month's General Election most of us will have been disappointed, as Catholics, in the narrowness of the objectives being discussed. We have remained in the inward-looking world of 'take back control' rather than in the realm of caring and sharing which is at the very heart of the Christian religion. The plight of refugees was not mentioned in the main party manifestos; instead immigration policy has become focused on recruiting the best-qualified and most talented people from poor countries, whereas few 'points' will be awarded to the tragic and desperate people in all those rubber boats. A Christian approach would be needs-based, not points-based.

Nearly everywhere around the globe the common good is under pressure, as we see from the decline of internationalism. After the disasters of the Second World War powerful international organisations were set up in order to promote a peaceful future, including the United Nations, NATO and the European Coal and Steel Community which developed into the European Union. Although NATO has just celebrated its 70th birthday the UN has lost some of its effectiveness and the EU has begun to crumble as the UK seeks to negotiate its exit by the end of January.

The Roman Catholic Church, arguably the greatest international organisation, is acutely vulnerable to the growth of localism and factionalism. Across large areas of the Middle East Christians have been driven out, and although in some places they are returning there are great risks. Some of these problems will be discussed by Cardinal Michael Fitzgerald in the Manchester Newman Lecture in May. In the past the great world religions have often been able to live in relative harmony but today extreme factions are too often imposing violent outcomes. Meanwhile the biggest country, China, is determined to maintain tight political control within its own territory over global religions such as Catholicism, Islam and Buddhism.

We are all gripped by conflicting loyalties. On the one hand, we wish to support the culture which has created and nurtured us. On the other we have an urge to reach out and seek new people and ideas, and to respond to the needs of others. Most of the time the first of these instincts is dominant. Populist politicians know this and they inflame nationalist sentiments: their basic strategy is to present foreigners, especially immigrants, as competitors and intruders who pose a threat.

We are, however, in the end, citizens of the whole world and are dependent on the sustainability of a 'common home', as Pope Francis emphasised in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The long letter to the editor in this issue by Edward Echlin explores how we should balance our responsibilities. We cannot hide away, we must face the world out there and welcome it with open arms. Sadly, Edward died last month. In his 1999 book *Earth Spirituality* he wrote: "The shortest way home, as Chesterton said, is to go all the way around the world. I am a long way from northwest Detroit on the edge of the Michigan fields and lakes. Yet I am also back where I started, for the earth community is still the same as when I opened eyes upon its beauty a lifetime ago in Michigan. It still points beyond itself to Mystery, as Hopkins said, to 'yonder, yonder, yonder'."

Barry Riley

Celebrating the Canonisation



Herts Circle's canonisation cake

chairman of the Association's North Staffs Circle, joined the Birmingham Oratory's pilgrimage in Rome.

He writes that although the service commenced at 10am in St Peter's Square it was necessary to arrive at 8am. to be sure of one of the 20,000 seats. St John Henry was one of five candidates that day for canonisation. The other four were: the Indian mystic Mother Mariam Theresia Chiramel Mankifyan, who founded the Congregation of the Holy Family; the Swiss laywoman and Third Order Franciscan Margaret Bays who dedicated her life to prayer and the service of her parish community; the Italian Sister Giuseppina Vannini who founded the Congregation of the Daughters of St Camillus, dedicated to serving the sick and suffering; and the Brazilian Sister Dulce Lopes Pontes, a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God.

During his address Pope Francis made several comments on Newman. He referred to him as a cardinal, writer, theologian and poet, urging believers to step beyond their comfort zones. "Let us ask to be like 'kindly lights' amid the circling gloom," he said. He quoted from a Newman sermon "to be cheerful, easy, kind, gentle, courteous, candid and unassuming". The Pope said that Christian Faith demands that believers should be willing to walk uphill and undergo a purification: "Faith calls for a journey, a going out from ourselves".

Later the Oratorians held their own celebration in the Chiesa Nuova, the Church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, founded by St Philip Neri. Many readings were given by Oratorians from all over the world. There was an address in thanksgiving for a new Oratorian Saint by the Very Rev Ignatius Harrison of Birmingham Oratory.

There were other celebrations. On the Saturday evening Peter Hambley had gone to

On Sunday, October 13th, St John Henry Newman, patron of the Newman Association, was canonised in Rome. A number of members of the Association were present at the ceremony in St Peter's Square and several have kindly submitted their impressions of the occasion. Also, here in the UK, various local Circles have organised their own events and some of these are also reported here.

Because of St John Henry's historical links with Birmingham there has been a special interest in the canonisation in the Midlands area. Peter Hambley, past

the Basilica of St Maria Maggiore where a vigil of prayer was held, with the participation of the choir of the London Oratory School. The service featured the Newman hymns Praise to the Holiest in the Height and Lead Bright. Bernard Longley, the Archbishop of Birmingham, was there, as was Dr Ian Ker, the celebrated biographer of St John Henry, and also Melissa Villalobis, who experienced a miraculous cure after praying to St John Henry.



Carey Hendron (left), Rosalind Hartley and Peter Hambley, with a friend

On Monday the 14th another celebration was held at the Papal Basilica of St John Lateran. The Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster. The final hymn was Firmly I believe and truly.

Also present in Rome that day for the canonisation of the five was Winifred Flanagan, President of the Newman Association and also a Birmingham resident. "The atmosphere was electric, friendly and expectant," she reports. "How many devout prayers had been said for all these holy people, in their own land, for many years?" "People assembled early, from every part of the planet. We even saw visitors from the Amazon region in their feathered headdresses walking along, to queue up humbly with the rest of us! The liturgy was deeply humbling: His Holiness has a gentle voice and gives the impression of being a true father to his people. The magnificence of the ceremony touched one's heart and mind. To hear the Credo professed by so many thousands of pilgrims was amazing."

She noted that representatives of the Church of England were watching the ceremony, and that Prince Charles represented the Queen. So the event "not only spoke of the journey in holiness of St John Henry Newman but embraced brothers and sisters in the Anglican Communion".

The long campaign

Winifred, with her knowledge of the long history of the campaign in Birmingham, has also contributed some comments on the background to the cause for the canonisation. It began, she says, in the 1950s under the auspices of the Oratorian Fathers in Birmingham, who led the endeavour, aided by the Diocese. Early supporters included Mgr Davies of Oscott College. Winifred adds that "the towering figure of

Fr Gregory Winterton, who founded The Friends of Cardinal Newman with the aim of encouraging funding for the cause, and the spreading of knowledge of his work worldwide, should be celebrated for his many years of work."

Winifred also has something to say about the relevance of the canonisation to the Newman Association. "We can celebrate our seventy-seven years since being founded on the inspiration of St John Henry's desire for 'an educated laity' and we are proud of the many years of lay effort and resolve which have enabled us to remain faithful to that aim".

She concludes: "We hope too that his Pilgrim journey to fulfil God's will, now shown in his Sainthood, should be a guide to many; it will comfort the comfortless and give glory to God".

Some Circle events around the UK

Birmingham, September 14th: "Holiness in the world", A reflection on the life of John Henry Newman, by David McLaughlin

Worcester, September 19th: Newman – A Journey to Sainthood by Rev Douglas Lamb

Coventry, October 9th: Morning Prayer at the Chapel of Unity, Coventry Cathedral, to celebrate the feast of Blessed John Henry Newman

Hertfordshire, October 11th: Mass and Lunch to celebrate the Canonisation of John Henry Newman

Tyneside, October 12th: Newman: a Saint for our Time? by Fr. Andrew Downie, Professor Terry Wright and Dr Sheridan Gilley

N. Merseyside, October 27th: Lunch to celebrate the canonisation of Blessed John Henry Newman with speaker Rev Dr Canon Rod Gardiner

Ealing, December 12th: Ecumenical service and reception to celebrate the Canonisation of St John Henry Newman



Mass in the Lady Chapel, St Albans Cathedral

At St Albans the Hertfordshire Circle gathered to celebrate Catholic Mass in the Lady Chapel of the Anglican St Albans Cathedral. Afterwards members transferred to the Cathedral's restaurant for an excellent lunch. It being a Friday there was a choice of a very tasty fish pie or a vegetarian dish. Shortly afterwards this was supplemented by slices of a special canonisation cake featuring a picture of the Saint himself.



Ecumenical service in the Newman chapel, St Benedict's, Ealing

In Ealing the Circle organised an ecumenical service in the Newman Chapel of the Abbey Church of St Benedict. Prayers and readings were supplemented by a musical recording of the closing section of *The Dream of Gerontius*, the Newman poem set to music by Edward Elgar. There was also a reading from an article by Prince Charles published on October 12th in the *l'Osservatore Romano* newspaper, in which he spoke of Newman's lasting legacy.



Afterwards members watched a short video of part of the ceremony in Rome.

Barry Riley

The Last Supper and the Origins of the Eucharist

By Bernard Robinson

Many preachers take it as axiomatic that the Last Supper was the first Eucharist. So did the Council of Trent. (Denzinger § 875). The use of 'chalice' rather than 'cup' in the present Catholic version of the Canon in England and Wales when speaking of the Last Supper is, I presume, predicated on the understanding that the meal was a Eucharist. How certain is this? I shall here be arguing that the relationship of the Eucharist to the Last Supper is rather more complex than is commonly supposed.

The Dating of the Last Supper

Our earliest account of the Last Supper, in 1 Cor 11 (written from Ephesus, AD c.55-56), does not say when the Last Supper took place in relation to Passover, only that it was "in the night when he was handed over." In Mark 14, Matt 26 and Lk 22, the Last Supper is a Passover meal, held on 14/15th Nisan (a Hebrew month in the Spring).

Some of the details of the Last Supper are especially characteristic of Passover – reclining; dipping; timing (at night). (See, e.g. Mk 14:18, 20, 17.) On the other hand it is strange that Mark and Matthew do not mention the eating of the Passover lamb. Lk 22:15 ("I have eagerly desired to eat this *pascha* with you") could refer to the lamb, but probably means the Passover meal itself. In the Synoptics, the unleavened bread takes on the prominence accorded in the Passover meal to the lamb. If the Last Supper was a regular Passover meal, this is perhaps surprising.



In John, the meal is eaten the day before Passover, 13/14th Nisan, and Jesus is crucified on the day when the Passover lambs are slaughtered in the Temple (13:1; 18:28; 19:14). Many scholars suspect John of changing the dating in order to have Jesus die at the time when the lambs were being killed. There is, though, an early Jewish *baraita* (*bSanh* 43a) saying that Yeshu (Jesus) was hung (crucified) "on the eve of Passover." Also, G. Vermes is probably right to say that Jesus' Trials and Crucifixion 'could not have taken place on Passover day.' People are said to have come in from the fields (Simon of Cyrene, Mk 15:21, Lk 23:26), and the disciples to have gone to buy spices (women from Galilee: Lk 23:56). On Passover? If we accept John's dating, do we have to accept that the meal was not really Paschal in nature? No. The Paschal details in the Synoptics (reclining; dipping; timing [at night]), are found in John too (Jn 13:23, 26, 28, 30). There are additional Paschal echoes in his reference to hyssop and the non-breaking of bones. Why so? The solution may be that, knowing that he would not live to eat the regular Passover meal that year, Jesus held an improvised Passover earlier, without, of course, the use of a lamb. Knowing that the Last Supper had Paschal features, the Synoptists will have perhaps assumed that it was a regular Passover meal. We can, then, perhaps take it that, whether an official Passover or an unofficial one, the Last Supper had Paschal features. What, then, was the origin and nature of Passover?

The Origin and Nature of Passover

Origin

The Jewish feast of *Pesach*, Passover, celebrated over seven days, may be a combination of two different celebrations involving unleavened bread:

- A rite intended to avert evil (the destroyer, *maschith*, Exod 12:23) held in the Spring, when nomads were on the move
- A Spring-time fertility festival (*Matzoth*, Unleavened Bread) taken over from the Canaanites, the first harvest festival of the year: that of the barley crop.

Nature

The combined feast (cf Mk 14:1 'The Passover and the festival of Unleavened Bread') is the first of the three pilgrim feasts in the Jewish calendar (the others being Pentecost and Tabernacles). For the Jew it brings together past, present and future. It commemorates the most spectacular event of the past, the Exodus from Egypt; it celebrates present-day Jewishness; and it looks forward to the Messianic age. (There is a tradition that Messiah will come at *Pesach*.) The Seder

(Passover) service as observed today is in essentials much the same as prescribed in the Mishnah, AD c. 200. Some scholars doubt whether we can assume that Passover was celebrated in quite the same way as early as Jesus' day. In what follows, however, I shall assume that it was in fact much the same.

The basic features of the Seder meal are:

(1) The *haggadah*: the recital of the events of the Exodus event. Remembrance of the past is central to the celebration (c.f. Exod 12:14, "This day shall serve to you as a *zikkārōn*, remembrance"). Mishnah *Pes.* 10:5 quotes the words of Gamaliel (a rabbinical leader): In every generation, everyone is obliged to regard himself as though he had actually gone forth from Egypt, for it is written: "You shall tell your son on that day: 'This is done because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt' (Exod 13:8). Not only our fathers did the Holy One, blessed be he, redeem, but us too he redeemed with them".

(2) The eating of the Passover *lamb* (nowadays omitted in the absence of a Temple; it is represented by a lamb shankbone), unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

(3) The *interpretation* of these elements. This is not explicitly enjoined in the Mishnah.

(4) The drinking of *four glasses of wine*. ("They give to the poorest man in Israel not less than four cups of wine": *Pes.* 10:1). Two are drunk before the meal proper, two after. A single fifth cup is then filled, Elijah's cup; Elijah was expected to return at Passover.



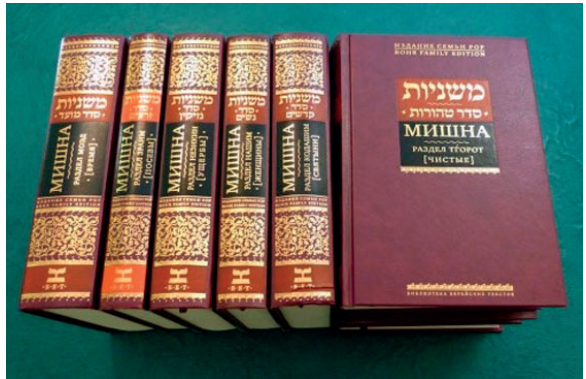
Seder-Plate



(5) A traditional element not mentioned in the Mishnah is the *Afikoman*. This is a piece of unleavened bread eaten at the conclusion of the meal. Sometimes (mainly in the Ashkenazi community) it is hidden and the children have to search for it.

The Passover of Egypt and the Passover of the Generations

The Mishnah, a collection of rabbinic laws and traditions, distinguishes between “the Passover of Egypt [Exod 12] and the Passover of [subsequent] generations” (Pes.9:5) . The Passover of Egypt involved smearing the door post with blood. Subsequent Passovers did not. Nor did they involve having one’s loins girt and one’s feet shod with sandals, or holding one’s staff in one’s hand. They included the drinking of wine, about which nothing is said in respect of the Passover of Egypt.



The Passover of Egypt looked forward to the Exodus; the Passover of the Generations looked back and commemorated that event. So, perhaps, with the Last Supper and the Eucharist? There will be more on this later.

Problem Elements in the Last Supper Accounts

Are the Remembrance words historical?

“Do this in memory of me” is found in the Gospels only in the Longer Text of Luke. Some scholars, therefore doubt whether Jesus said the words. I think he probably did. Paul’s testimony in 1 Cor 11:25 surely means that he himself had been taught that Jesus said these words and that he himself had so taught the Corinthian church which he founded AD c.50. The probable implication is that we can take the tradition back to the time of Paul’s acceptance of Christian claims AD c.36, or at least to his visit to Jerusalem three years later (Gal 1:18), and that we can presume its historicity.

Whether Paul implies that it was common practice in his day (in Corinth or elsewhere) to rehearse at the Lord’s Supper an account of the Last Supper narrative, is unclear. From the fact that as late as c. 150 Justin Martyr (1st Apology, 67) speaks of the President as *extemporising* the Eucharistic Prayer, we may conclude that liturgical form remained fluid until a century after Paul’s time. Some Eucharistic Prayers even today do not contain the so-called ‘words of consecration’, notably the Anaphora (Canon) of Addai and Mari used by the Assyrian Church and some other Eastern churches. In 2001 a document issued by Pope John Paul II accepted such liturgies as valid.

Did Jesus himself eat and drink at the Last Supper?

Some think not. Luke has Jesus say, “I have eagerly desired to eat this *pascha* with you before I suffer. For I tell you that I shall not eat it [again] until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God” (22:15-16). This is ambiguous: (i) You eat it, but I shall not”; (ii) “This is the last time that I shall eat it.” I think that the second interpretation is the more likely since the equivalent saying over the cup (v.18) has “From now on [*apo tou nun*] I shall not drink...”

After telling us that Jesus had said how much he had been looking forward to eating this meal, Luke can scarcely want to imply that during it he sat by watching the disciples eat and drink. Mk 14:25 and Matt 26:29 have similar words but spoken only over the wine. In all three accounts, what we seem to have here is that, sensing that death is imminent, Jesus says that the next such festivity will occur in the Kingdom.

Over which element did Jesus say, "This is my body"?

The Unleavened Bread eaten during the course of the meal? If, however, there was an Afikoman (a piece of unleavened bread) at the Last Supper, it could have been said over this. This would square with the fact that Luke and Paul date the words over the cup "after supper". The bread may have been the Afikoman and the cup the third cup, drunk after the meal proper.

"My Body" or "My Flesh"?

Since Aramaic and Hebrew have no word for a living body, John (6:51, "This is my flesh for the life of the world") may be closer to Jesus' own words than Paul and the Synoptists. The early church's preference for *body* (Gr *sōma*) will be because this word includes the idea of a corporate body. They wanted to associate the Eucharist with the building up of the church as the body of Christ. Thus Paul, in saying that those who eat and drink unworthily are guilty in respect of the body and blood of the Lord...not discerning the body (1 Cor 11:27-29), is probably referring both to the body of the Lord and to the Church as his body.

The word *covenant* occurs in all four accounts. Mark and Matthew have Jesus talk of "my blood of the covenant", recalling Exod 24:8 (on Sinai Moses makes a covenant using the blood of oxen). In Paul (and the Longer Version of Luke) we have the expression "the new covenant in my blood", a clear reference to Jeremiah 31, indicating that with the shedding of his blood Jesus would usher in a new unilateral covenant between God and his people.

Origin(s) of the Eucharist

A Single Source?

It is probably an oversimplification to think that Jesus at the Last Supper simply instituted the Eucharist and then Christians adopted it as a weekly (and later daily) practice.

Reasons for saying this:

- The Eucharist is a commemoration of Jesus' death, and the elements involve the *Risen* Christ.
- The absence of an account of the Institution from John's account of the Last Supper, and perhaps from the original text of Luke, is hard to square with the traditional view. If John, and perhaps Luke, did not connect the Eucharist with the Last Supper, it seems likely that the connection, historically speaking, was rather less straightforward than is often supposed.
- The *Didache* [c.AD 100?] ch9 treats the Eucharist (though it is possible that this here means an Agape-meal rather than the sacrament) as a thanksgiving for the gift of Jesus and as an anticipation of the future gathering of the Kingdom. There is no reference here (or in ch14: "On the Lord's Day, assemble and break bread...") to the Passion or the Last Supper.

We may note in this connection that the tradition in the West is to see the consecration happening when the Last Supper account is narrated and the words "This is my body..." pronounced. In the East, the consecration occurs at the *epiclēsis*, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, which in the Eastern rites follows the Last Supper narrative. (In the West it precedes it.)

Several Sources?

It would seem quite likely that the Eucharist is a development from four things:

Jesus' practice of eating with all and sundry

e.g. Mk 1:29-31, 2:15; Lk 5:27-34, 7:31-34, 11:37, 14:1, 15:1-2, 19:7.

Hence Jesus' reputation as "a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners" (Mt 11:19). This practice will have been intended to be an icon of God's calling all, irrespective of unworthiness or standing, to the Kingdom. These meals prefigured the Messianic Banquet (cf Isa 25:6). (So did the Qumran meal, but only initiates were admitted to that.) Luke has eight meals; at one of them, in a Pharisee's house, Jesus says that "the poor, disabled, lame and blind" should be invited to dinner, whereupon one guest exclaims "Blessed shall be whoever eats bread in the Kingdom of God." (Lk 14:15). This brings out clearly the fact that Jesus' meals foreshadowed the Messianic Banquet. Appropriately, Jesus then tells the Parable of the Great Banquet (14:16-24). At the Last Supper, Luke (alone) has Jesus say: "You will eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom" (22:30).

Jesus' Feeding Miracles.

These again prefigured the Kingdom. (The Gospel of John connects the Feeding of the 5,000, Jn 6, not the Last Supper, with the Eucharist.)

The Last Supper

This is the culmination of Jesus' meals with his disciples. He transforms a paschal meal into a foreshadowing of his death, and enjoins the disciples to do what he is doing. He thus echoes God's words to Moses and the Hebrews: "This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast for the LORD. Throughout your generations, you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever" (Exod 12:14).

Just as remembrance in the case of the Seder meal involves a memorial not only of the original meal, but much more so of that which it led up to, the Exodus, so the Eucharist is a memorial more of the Death and Resurrection, which the Last Supper presaged, than of that meal itself.

Meals with Jesus after his Resurrection

Lk 24:30 "While he was at table with them, [in Emmaus] he took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to them."

Acts 10:41 "witnesses who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead" (Peter in Cornelius' house); cf 1:4 "while *synalizomenos*, eating [or lodging] with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem."

Jn 21:13: "he gave them bread and fish."

The early Church's fellowship meals .

Acts three times refers to the Breaking of Bread. Some scholars (e.g. Dupont, Marshall and Ratzinger) find all three to refer to the Eucharist. I think that they claim too much.

Acts 2:42-46 has the early Christians persevering in The Teaching of the Apostles, The Fellowship, The Breaking of Bread and The Prayers. They daily frequent the Temple, breaking bread at home, taking sustenance with *agalliasis* (joy) and sincerity of heart. They presumably saw these meals as continuing their fellowship with Jesus. I cannot agree with Dupont and Marshall that we are talking here about a Eucharistic celebration. Not only is wine not mentioned, but “there is no evidence for the daily observance of the Eucharist in the earliest period of the Church’s history (both the Didache and Justin speak of a weekly celebration on the Lord’s Day)” (Robinson, 492). Daily Mass probably began in the monasteries. In the East, the Liturgy is still normally celebrated only on Sundays and Feast days.

In **20:7,11**, we hear that when ‘we’ had gathered together to break bread on a Sunday at Troas (v.7), a boy, Eutychus, fell from a window at midnight during Paul’s sermon. Paul revived the boy, broke bread and tasted it (v.11), then concluded his sermon. As this occurs on a Sunday, can it mean the Eucharist? In v.7, possibly, though there is no mention of wine. We will return to this text later. In v.11 Paul does not distribute the bread, he only eats it himself. It seems more likely that Paul is merely keeping up his strength until he finishes his sermon at dawn before departing. (v11)

In **27:33-38**, on Paul’s way to Rome by sea, after a storm breaks out, so that none of the crew or passengers eats for fourteen days (because the sea water has got into the victuals or because of sea-sickness?), Paul eventually calls on them to take some sustenance and then “taking bread he gave thanks to God before them all and breaking it began to eat. Heartened by this, they all took sustenance.” I cannot follow Marshall, Dupont and others, to take this to mean that Paul himself celebrated the Eucharist in the presence of a crowd of unbaptized soldiers and sailors.

Acts, therefore, seems to be, mostly at least, speaking of regular fellowship meals held in the early Church. They probably were thought of as not only continuing their fellowship with Jesus but as an icon of the coming Messianic banquet. Wine was probably not normally drunk, and the meals cannot, in my view, accurately be described as Eucharists.

Celebration of the Eucharist

Wine was usually drunk by Jews only on the major festivals, and at first the meals of the early Christians in Palestine may not have included the use of wine. Jewish Christians may (though this is speculation) have taken the Command to Repeat as referring to an annual celebration at Passover-time, and they may thus have originally commemorated the Last Supper and the death of Jesus, with bread and wine only once a year. But by the mid-50s, at least in Corinth, wine was an accepted part of the regular Christian communal meal, which was indisputably Eucharistic in nature. Christians believed that this meal united them with Jesus, who was present with them as they ate and drank.

This was no ordinary food: to eat of it was to partake of Jesus himself, in his death and his Risen state. “The cup that we bless, is it not a sharing (*koinōnia*) in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, though many, are one body, because we all share in the one loaf.” (1 Cor 10:16) The elements on the table were in some sense Jesus’ own body and blood. They were, as Jn 6:51b-59 would later put it, eating Jesus’ flesh and drinking his blood.

To eat and drink unworthily, Paul told them (1 Cor 11:27), was to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. The meal recalled Jesus' death and was instrumental in deepening the unity of his followers, as also in hastening the coming of the Kingdom. How far back can we trace the observance of the Eucharist? Certainly, as we have seen, to the mid-50's. But in 1 Cor 11:23-26 Paul says that the Eucharist is to be celebrated in accordance with "What I have received of the Lord." This as we have seen, will probably mean that the tradition is at least as early as the mid or late 30's of our era. Perhaps the Eucharist was celebrated on Sundays (as it certainly was from the second century) and fellowship meals on other days of the week? The Sunday meal at Troas (Acts 20:7), although wine is not mentioned, may well have been a Eucharist. It occurred during Paul's third missionary journey, not long after he had sent the Corinthians his first letter to them, a letter which contains the dominical command at the Last Supper "Do this in memory of me".

Conclusion: An Attempted Synthesis

Jesus came to usher in God's Kingdom: that is, a world based on love rather than exploitation, a world that was to be divine gift rather than a reward for greater or lesser worthiness. The Kingdom was to be like a party meal at which all would be equal, since all would be guests at the Father's table. Like all meals, it would not only celebrate existing unity but also bring about, or deepen, unity. One of Jesus' ways of teaching about the Kingdom was by anticipating it, through meals in houses and by picnics on Galilean hillsides. On at least one occasion he is said, like Elisha before him (2 Kings 4:42-44), to have miraculously multiplied the loaves.

When it became clear that his plan for the Kingdom was being rejected by the Jewish leaders, he held one last such gathering, either at Passover or just beforehand in the form of an unofficial Passover. Passover commemorated the liberation of the Hebrews, back in the 13th century BC, which had led to the creation of the people of Israel. It was thought of as uniting Jews over the centuries in a common bond with Moses and the Exodus generation. But also as looking forward to the dawning of the Messianic age.

The food eaten had a symbolic significance: the bread stood for 'the bread of affliction', the wine for joy, etc. At his Last Supper, Jesus interpreted the unleavened bread (perhaps in the form of the Afikoman at the end of the meal) and the wine with reference to his coming death. What his life had not achieved his death would bring about. His sharing of this meal with them would give them fellowship in his death, and an earnest of the life of the Kingdom. He spoke of this meal as a farewell meal but one which they should repeat (annually, or more frequently?).

The Last Supper symbolically anticipated Calvary, just as the Passover of Egypt did the Exodus; their subsequent meals, like the Passover of the Generations, would commemorate and re-present the great act of liberation.

After his Resurrection, Jesus several times appeared in corporeal form to his disciples at meal-times. The disciples themselves often met together to 'break bread',



An Afikoman

normally without the use of wine, and they saw these gatherings as continuing Jesus' practice throughout his ministry right up to his final meal with them. The Christians experienced on these occasions the presence of Jesus among them. The Jesus who had died was alive and continued to share his life with them. From the end of the 30's, at the latest, the Eucharist, which included the use of wine, had come to be celebrated (on Sundays?) in compliance with what tradition stated that Jesus had commanded at his Last Supper.



Was the Last Supper, then, the first Mass/Eucharist? It can, I think, only be so described by a rather loose use of language. The Last Supper was a farewell meal but, more importantly, a paschal meal at which Jesus pointed to the bread and wine as symbolising his flesh and blood at his coming Passion, at which time a new covenant would be enacted. He directed his disciples in future "Do this" in order to commemorate him in his self-offering. After the Resurrection, the disciples regularly held meals together, continuing Jesus' practice, and from at least the mid to the late 30s commemorated his Death and Resurrection in fully Eucharistic celebrations in fulfilment of Jesus' command at the Last Supper.

Bernard Robinson, a member of the Tyneside Circle, taught Scripture at Ushaw College, Durham, from 1986 until 1999. This is an edited version of a talk to the Tyneside Circle in July 2019.

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Human Values or Human Rights?

By John Duddington

Human Rights – ripe for re-examination?

The manifesto of the incoming Government, elected on 12th December 2019, included a commitment to:

update the Human Rights Act and administrative law to ensure that there is a proper balance between the rights of individuals, our vital national security and effective government.....In our first year we will set up a Constitution, Democracy & Rights Commission that will examine these issues in depth, and come up with proposals to restore trust in our institutions and in how our democracy operates



This interest in looking at the nature and scope of the Human Rights Act, 1998, need cause no surprise. For one thing it is now twenty years since it was first enacted and all such pieces of legislation need as time passes to be looked at afresh to see that they meet current needs. Secondly as Lord Sumption pointed out in his 2019 Reith Lectures the Human Rights Act, which gives effect to the European Convention on Human Rights, has been, in the hands of the courts, subject to mission creep.

The most striking example is Article 8, which provides a right to respect for a person's 'private and family life, his home and his correspondence', subject to certain restrictions that are 'in accordance with law' and 'necessary in a democratic society'. This unexceptionable statement was, as Lord Sumption says, designed as 'a protection against the surveillance state in totalitarian regimes'. In fact, it has been extended to cover 'anything that intrudes on an individual person's autonomy'. This includes

'the legal status of illegitimate children, extradition, criminals sentencing, abortion, artificial insemination, homosexuality and same sex unions, child abduction, the policing of public demonstrations, employment and social security rights, legal aid, planning and environmental law, noise abatement, eviction for non-payment of rent and much else besides'

Need for re-examination

Lord Sumption's point is not that these are unworthy subjects of legal protection, but that this great edifice, built upon one sentence, is something that needs re-examination on the basis that unelected judges and not Parliament have created all of this new law. I would go further and ask whether we need a fundamental re-appraisal of the concept of human rights and, if this is so, then it is essential that there is a Christian input.

Present-day concepts of human rights date from just after the Second World War: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was agreed at the United Nations General

Assembly gathered in Paris in 1948 and the European Convention on Human Rights was agreed at Rome in 1950. Both were, of course, influenced by the need to protect people from the excesses of totalitarian states and so the emphasis was very much on personal freedom and personal autonomy. However, as pointed out by Nicholas Wolterstorff, 'the UN documents do not explain what a human right is; after a few introductory comments, they each just give a list of human rights'. The same is true of the European Convention on Human Rights.

This means that there is no attempt to place human rights within any religious perspective. Rowan Williams remarks that: 'What makes the gap between religion and the discourse of human rights worrying is that the language of the Universal Declaration is unthinkable without the kind of moral universalism that religious ethics safeguards'. Moreover, there is a practical concern, as David McLroy points out: 'The problem with the idea of rights as a human invention is that if rights are just a human invention, although we need rights to protect ourselves against the state, we also only have rights if they are created or enforced by the state'.

A Christian Basis for Human Rights

It remains true that many Christians are suspicious of the concept of human rights. This is, I think, for three reasons. The first is that they are seen as weapons in the hands of aggressive secularists. There is some truth in this. Vanessa Klug for instance, says that: 'Human rights are seen as a possible alternative common morality for the UK'. Her implication is clear: now that society no longer speaks a religious language common to most of us human rights can supply this. Secondly, the notion of a right is seen as itself fundamentally unchristian. The language of rights, with its connotations of individuals asserting what they want at the expense of a Christian concern for others, is seen as selfish. Finally, the notion of human rights is seen as coming from the Enlightenment idea of natural rights rather than having a specifically Christian basis and in particular a Catholic one.

There is something in all of this but not so as, in my view, to destroy any Christian concern for human rights. To take the last point first, it is true that thinkers such as John Locke (1632-1704) took the existing concept of natural law and natural justice and turned this into one of natural rights, one of which was the right of freedom of religion. However, he went further and built his idea of natural rights around that of property. Private property was not seen as theft from the common good but was instead 'compatible with the natural common ownership which existed in the beginning of things'. Few would disagree with the principle of this but the emphasis on rights of property as natural rights rather than, for instance, the right to freedom from poverty, made this, in McLroy's phrase: 'a theory of human rights for rich men'. Locke's ideas undoubtedly inspired the American Revolution and influenced the framers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

However, to see such thinkers as Locke as the progenitors of human rights is to ignore the evidence of Christian concern for human rights. As Newlands points out: 'The Bible talks of release of captives, and Jesus speaks of visiting prisoners'. In a more modern context St. Wulfstan, Bishop of Worcester, visited Bristol, then part of his diocese, in the late 11th century to preach against the slave trade. Take, too, this sermon of St. John Chrysostom: 'The rich man is a kind of steward of the money which is owed

for distribution to the poor. He is directed to distribute it to his fellow servants who are in want...for his own goods are not his own but belong to his fellow servants'. What St. John Chrysostom is in effect saying is that the poor have a *right* to that money. This example could be multiplied many times.

Moreover, it is clear that this emphasis for rights was carried on into the Middle Ages, as Brian Tierney has shown, and was most memorably demonstrated by the Dominican friar Anton Montesimo in 1511 in a sermon in what is now the Dominican Republic. The place was a makeshift wooden church on the island of Hispaniola. The text of Montesimo's sermon was: 'a voice cries in



John Locke

the wilderness' and his audience, as Ruston puts it: 'were Spanish who had crossed the ocean to get rich in the Indies as quickly as possible'. The context was oppression by the Spaniards of the native Indians. Montesimo's central words were these:

I am the voice of Christ in the wilderness of this island...such a voice you have never yet heard, more harsh, more terrifying and dangerous than you ever though you would hear. This voice says that you are all in mortal sin and that you will live and die in it for the cruelty and tyranny with which you use these innocent people. Tell me, with what right, with what justice, do you hold these Indians in such cruel and horrible slavery? Are they not men? Do they not have rational souls? Are you not obliged to love them as yourselves? Don't you understand this? Can't you grasp this?

Nor must we forget the noble part played by Protestant Christians in ensuring that human rights were included in the United Nations system after the Second World War and it is worth recalling that they received inspiration from the Christmas wartime radio broadcasts of Pope Pius XII. When, moreover, the United Nations General Assembly gathered in Paris in 1948 the future Pope John XXIII, then Nuncio in Paris, was active in promoting what became the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

The third objection

It is clear, I think, that the third objection to a Christian concern for human rights, namely that they lack a specifically Christian basis and, in particular, a Catholic one, is false. This, too, disposes of the first objection, that the language of human rights is used as a weapon against religion by aggressive secularists. If that is so then that is our fault for not putting forward a clear Christian commitment to the cause of human rights.

What, then of the second objection, that a concern for 'rights' as such is frankly not Christian? Not only is this true in itself, but logically the existence of a right must be preceded by a duty to give effect to that right. Simone Weil in *The Need for Roots* begins with this arresting passage:

The notion of obligations comes before that of rights, which is subordinate and relative to the former. A right is not effectual by itself, but only in relation to the obligation to which it corresponds, the effective exercise of that right springing not from the individual who possesses it, but from other men who consider themselves as being under a certain obligation towards him...

Pope Benedict XVI reflected this concern when he suggested that: 'Perhaps the doctrine of human rights ought today to be complemented by a doctrine of human obligations and human limits'.

A Way Forward

Given the Christian commitment to human rights what should be our attitude to any future reshaping of human rights legislation? I suggest that it should be informed by the following:

1. We start from the words of Pope Benedict in his address at Westminster Hall in 2010: *'The Catholic tradition maintains that the objective norms governing right action are accessible to reason, prescinding from the content of revelation. According to this understanding, the role of religion in political debate is not so much to supply these norms, as if they could not be known by non-believers – still less to propose concrete political solutions, which would lie altogether outside the competence of religion – but rather to help purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles.'* The point here is simple: it is not for us as Christians to insist on the details of laws or political programmes although as individuals acting on our faith we will undoubtedly wish to argue for particular positions. What we **can** do is to put forward certain fundamental arguments.
2. These arguments should not be based on the notion of autonomy which appears to underpin much of existing human rights laws. As Wolterstorff puts it, the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (and it may be said, of the European Convention on Human Rights too) is directed to 'the rights of normal adults and children in typical situations in the modern world'. As he puts it: 'They did not have in mind infants, those in a permanent coma or those with advanced dementia'. Suppose that I am compulsorily detained in a hospital for patients with acute mental illnesses: I am totally disorientated, possibly lacking in any kind of support from family and friends with my liberty removed. No doubt that this is necessary but what use is the language of human rights to me? Or what about the aborted foetus or the elderly, slightly confused but quite rational, person under pressure from family members to commit euthanasia as they can no longer be bothered to care for him/her? What, in short, about the most vulnerable members of our society?



Pope Benedict XVI.

For the Christian the way forward is to stress the unique dignity of each person as made in the image of God. Note that the word is not 'individual' but person with all that connotes. As Maritain puts it: 'Man is an individual who holds himself in hand by his intelligence and his will'. But there is more: Man (and woman) is a person and 'it is the spirit which is the root of personality'. It is the dignity of each person bringing with it the fundamental and inalienable *worth* of each and every human person which must be the bedrock of human rights.

3. Should I, however; have used the term 'rights' at all? It does have some value in general discussion because that is the way in which the discourse in this area is couched. However, if we are to respond as Christians to any Government suggestions as to the future content of human rights law, then I suggest that we as Christians could do worse than seek to agree amongst ourselves and perhaps amongst non-Christian religions, too, a statement of fundamental human *values*. This not only picks up Pope Benedict's point about the duty of Christians to 'purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles' but gets us away from the language of rights, although when the values are given concrete shape in legislation the use of 'rights' may be unavoidable.

So I end with a challenge to Newman members and any other readers: what Christian values should underpin our society? How should they be expressed? In the end we will be judged by how we meet the needs of the most vulnerable: the outcast and the prisoner, the old and the ill. 'In so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.' (Matt. 25:44-45).

John Duddington is a member of the Worcester Circle; he is Editor of Law & Justice – the Christian Law Review – and a member of the Editorial Committee of The Newman

Notes

- 1 Ibid. at p.57
- 2 Published as *Trials of the State: Law and the Decline of Politics* (London: Profile Books, 2019) see especially Chapter 3 Human Rights and Wrongs
- 3 Ibid. at p.57
- 4 *Journey Towards Justice: Personal Encounters in the Global South* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Baker Academic, 2013) at p. 130.
- 5 In 'Reconnecting human rights and religious faith' in *Faith in the Public Square* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012), p. 161.
- 6 D. McLroy 'Human Rights Theory: Fit For Purpose, Fundamentally Flawed or Reformable?' *Law and Justice* 173 (2014) pp. 129-144 at p. 132.
- 7 In *Values for a Godless Age* (Penguin: London, 2000), p. 192.
- 8 See in particular Locke's *Two Treatises on Government* ed. M. Goldie (London: Dent 1993).
- 9 Ruston, *Human Rights and the Image of God*, (SCM Press, London, 2004) p. 208.
- 10 D. McLroy 'Human Rights Theory: Fit For Purpose, Fundamentally Flawed or Reformable?' *Law and Justice* 173 (2014) pp. 129-144 at p. 134
- 11 In *Christ and Human Rights* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.13. This whole book is full of ideas for a Christian engagement with human rights and is enormously stimulating. See also J. Mahoney *The Challenge of Human Rights* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), which looks at the struggle for human rights from a wider perspective.

- 12 Quoted in Wolterstorff op. cit. at p. 66.
- 13 See the examples in Wolterstorff at Ch. 11.
- 14 In the *Idea of Natural Rights* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eerdmans, 1997).
- 15 I owe this account to Ruston, *Human Rights and the Image of God*, pp. 66-68
- 16 I have written at much more length on this topic in my *Christians and the State* (Leominster, Gracewing, 2016) and in particular Ch. 10.
- 17 The story is well told in John S. Nurser, *For All Peoples and All Nations* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005).
- 18 Nurser, *For All Peoples and All Nations*, p. 165.
- 19 Nurser, *For All Peoples and All Nations*, p. 171 fn. 27.
- 20 London; Routledge, 1952) page 3 (First published in Paris in 1949 as *L'Enracinement, prélude à une déclaration des devoirs envers l'être humain*).
- 21 In 'Was die welt zusammenhalt' (What keeps the World Together) an address given on January 19th 2004 at the Catholic University of Bavaria anniversary and published as Chapter 2 'Searching for Peace, Tensions and Dangers' in *Values in a Time of Upheaval* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), p. 40.
- 22 The whole of his address can be found in Peter Jennings (ed.), *Benedict XVI and Blessed John Henry Newman, The State Visit September 2010 The Official Record* (London: CTS, 2010), pp.102-106.
- 23 Wolterstorff op. cit. at page 131
- 24 In *The Rights of Man* (London; Godfrey Bles. 1940 at page 6. See also his *Scholasticism and Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1940) where this idea is more fully developed.

Finding Our Way 3

The Newman Association and Charitable Incorporated Status

Members will be interested to learn that work is proceeding well on gaining Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) status for the Newman Association. The Newman was originally incorporated as a company limited by guarantee and in 1990 it also gained charitable status. This has brought various advantages, not least that gift aid can be claimed. However, there is also the disadvantage that the officers have to deal with two regulators, Companies House and the Charity Commission. This has been a problem for many small charities and so the Charities Act 2011 allows an organisation such as ours to seek CIO status. The effect is that we retain our charitable status as a company, and also our charitable status, but these two are now combined into one so that we will only deal with the Charity Commission and no longer with Companies House.

In order to gain this status we need the approval of our members and we intend to seek this at the AGM on June 13th, 2020. Further details will be given in the May issue of *The Newman* but it is important to stress that we are using our existing constitution, with some slight changes which will be explained in the May issue. This means in particular that the existing objects are unchanged and so are the existing membership criteria. This is in line with what was proposed at the AGM in 2019.

John Duddington & Ian Jessiman
(On behalf of Council)

2020 Manchester Newman Lecture



The Situation of Christians in the Arab World

Michael Cardinal Fitzgerald M. Afr

Tuesday May 19th 2020

Archbishop Michael was created Cardinal by Pope Francis at his most recent consistory. He belongs to the Missionaries of Africa (previously the White Fathers). He is a leading expert on Islam, Christian-Muslim relations and inter-religious dialogue.

Fluent in Arabic (he is a graduate in Arabic of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London University), at his retirement in 2012 he was papal nuncio to Egypt and delegate to the League of Arab States. From 2002 to 2006 he headed the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue.

6.30 for 7pm Friends Meeting House, Manchester M2 5NS

Membership Report

We welcome the following new members of the Newman Association to the circles indicated:

Dr Jane Taylor (Herts); Mr Malcolm and Mrs Kathleen Gregor (Tyneside); Mr Joseph McKeague (Tyneside); Mr Mark Sevia (Birmingham/Nottingham); Mr David and Mrs Margaret Ivatts (Eastbourne and Bexhill); Mrs Pauline Kirton (Worcester); Dr David Slingsby (York); Mrs Isabelle Boyd (Glasgow Circle).

With regret we have received notification of the following deaths:

Hildegard Atherton, Coventry Circle (Sept 2019); Marie Casey, Rainham Circle; Dr Edward P Echlin, Eastbourne & Bexhill Circle; Mrs S. K Jameson, Hertfordshire Circle; Dr M.R. Sherman, Manchester and N Cheshire Circle; Mr Arthur Skelton, Edinburgh Circle; Dr Skillen, Tyneside Circle (Oct 2018);

May they, and all other past members of the Newman Association, rest in peace.

Patricia Egerton

Spirituality Page

The Atlas Martyrs

On March 27th, 1996, about twenty armed members of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) arrived at the Trappist Monastery of Tibhirine and kidnapped seven monks. Previously, on Christmas Eve, 1993, the GIA had forcibly entered the monastery but had been persuaded to leave.



Tibhirine Monastery in Algeria

On May 23rd, 1996, a communiqué from the GIA reported that they had executed the monks on May 21st and the Algerian government announced that their heads had been discovered on May 31st although the exact circumstances of their deaths remain uncertain and their bodies have never been discovered. On December 8th, 2018, they were beatified in the basilica of Santa Cruz in Oran.

In his spiritual will, written three years before the massacre, Fr Christian de Chergé, the prior, wrote:

When the time comes, I would like to be able to have an instant of lucidity that would allow me to ask for the pardon of God and that of men, my brothers, while forgiving with all my heart those who may have hit me....I cannot see how I could, in fact, rejoice in that this people I love could be accused of my assassination.

In his diary one of the monks Christophe, wrote for October 30th, 1994:

Listen, Church: I am

*Listen, I in you, as the Father is in me, Him in me and I in Him,
we are ONE*

Listen: I am in you the Resurrection: the Life.

Through you (in you, with you) I have passed the wall. My sin stands before me – this lack of love given to my brothers – through you, not for long am I – frightened, desperate ... I have passed through death.

When, at last, my fraternal existence will be lived on that side because you desire to see us come together to this eternal Life.

Today you say to me: stand up, go towards yourself, towards your paschal lamb.

On December 28th, 1993, Father Christian wrote to Sayah Attiya, head of the group of armed men who came to the door of the monastery on Christmas Eve:

My Brother, allow me to address you in this way; man to man, believer to believer, (...) In the present conflict in which the country is living, it is impossible for us to take sides. As foreigners we are forbidden to do so. Being monks (ruhban) we are bound to the choice God has made for us, that of prayer and a simple life, of manual work, of

welcoming and sharing with everyone above all with the poor (...) These principles of life are freely accepted by each of us. They bind us until death. I do not think God wills that this death should come through you (...) If, one day, the Algerians see that we are too many, then we will respect their desire to see us leave. With deep regret. I know that we will continue to love them, ALL of them, including you. When and how this message will reach you? It is of little importance! But today I need to write to you. Forgive me for doing so in my mother tongue. You will understand. And may the Only One of all life, lead us!

The story of the Atlas Martyrs was told in the film *Of Gods and Men*, 2010, dir. Xavier Beauvais. The film won the Grand Prix at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival.

Anne and John Duddington

London Newman Lecture: May 28th, 2020

Pope Francis and St John Henry Newman

Freedom, authority, and the challenge of the “isolated conscience”

by Austen Ivereigh



Austen Ivereigh is a leading Catholic author, campaigner and journalist. Formerly deputy editor of *The Tablet* he is a founder of Catholic Voices, which trains people to put Catholic perspectives to the media. He has written two books on Pope Francis, *The Great Reformer, Francis and the Making of a Pope* (2014) and *Wounded Shepherd: Pope Francis and His Struggle to Convert the Catholic Church* (2019).

The venue has yet to be decided

Advance notice

See you in York in July

Following the success of 2019's **Newman Conference** (with *Living Theology*) at the Bar Convent in York, we are delighted to be returning to the same venue in 2020 – **for the weekend of the 11th and 12th July** – with well-qualified speakers and a choice of courses on each day.

This year we have a scripture focus, in response to the Bishops' designation of the year of "The God who speaks". Our lead speaker will be **Fr Philip Harrison SJ**, who will give two bible-based courses; **Dr George Herring** will give a course on early church history and there will be a presentation by **Dr Ally Kateusz** on the role of women in the early church. Other speakers are to be announced.

As previously, it will be a two-day conference (one-day attendance is possible) with some accommodation available in the Bar Convent Guest House – again, as last time, these 20 rooms (mostly en-suite) will be held for us until the end of April. The charge for the conference will be £70 (students £35), which includes lunches and refreshments. The Guest House b+b charges per night per room range from about £40 (single, not en-suite) to £120 ('superior' double, with en-suite). **The conference and your accommodation must be booked separately (tell the Guest House: 'Newman').**

From mid-February, full details and the conference application form will be available from the web-site www.jesuit.org.uk/living-theology-york-2020 and here you will find up-to-date information about the speakers, their courses, and the time-table. There will also be information about travel (York Railway Station is very close) and parking facilities. In addition there are details of some of the alternative accommodation available in York, including two Premier Inns just over the road from the Bar Convent. We hope to see many Newman members in York in July! Non-members are also welcome, so please invite your friends, and especially any students who may be interested.

Patricia Egerton (for the organising group). [e-mail tpj.egerton@virgin.net]



At last year's conference

Keeping in contact

As reported at the last AGM, Council is working hard to develop the Association's membership and services. This includes improving communications with members. While postal communications are very expensive (it costs more than £600 to post to all members) most groups like The Newman Association increasingly use e-mail because it is virtually cost-free. *But unfortunately we don't have an up-to-date record of all the e-mail addresses of our members.*

We assure you that certain communications like AGM papers will continue to be posted in the normal way, but we urge you to support Council's efforts to make our Association more effective by letting us use your e-mail address, if you have one. This information will be used only for communications on Association business, and on matters likely to be of interest to our members; it will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, in accordance with GDPR regulations.

Please send and/or confirm your e-mail address to Council Member Alex Mthobi, using Newman.Association@yahoo.com. Thank you!

Book Review

Wisdom from the Christian Mystics, by David Torkington ; Winchester: Circle Books, 2017 (Paperback £15.99)

I do not find books on prayer, as distinct from books of prayers, always easy to read. Somehow, they do not seem to help much. That is probably my fault but, in my defence, I must say that some of them are pitched at such a level as to be way beyond someone like me for whom prayer can be an effort and at times a struggle.

What, then of this book? It is not a kind of instruction manual for praying, valuable though this kind of book can be. Instead, taking up its title, it is about mystics and considers mystical theology and through it, spirituality. It draws on a wide range of authors and its central argument is that with the condemnation of Quietism as a heresy in 1687 the Church lost touch with much authentic spiritual teaching which urgently needs to be rediscovered. Indeed, he argues that if there is to be another Council of the Church then the emphasis should be on the mystical life of the Church.

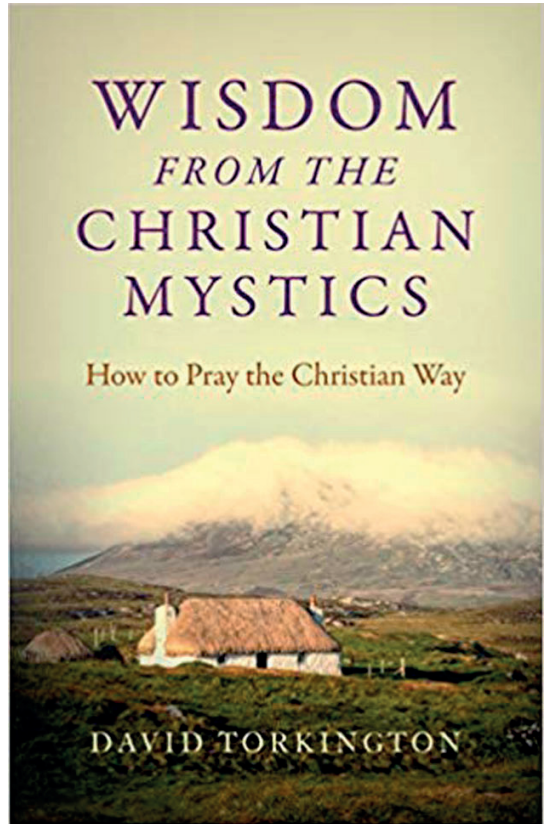
The author draws a great deal on the early Christian writings of, for instance, St. Ignatius of Antioch and Evagrius of Ponticus and strongly urges a rediscovery of early traditions of spirituality. Here he instances St. John Henry Newman who, of course, went back to the Early Fathers in his books such as *The Arians of the Fourth Century*. Just as Newman drew on this well, so he argues, we should too.

However, it would be wrong to give the impression that this is an academic book on spirituality for at the same time it gives many practical insights into how Christians can deepen their prayer life. The central message, for me at any rate, comes towards the end in Chapter 17 where, at page 297 the author tells of how he attended the Good Friday liturgy the year after his mother's death. He was greatly influenced by her and his account of the central part played in her life by her daily recitation of the Rosary was for me one of the most moving and also mostly helpful passages in this book. Her death moved him profoundly and yet here he was in church listening to the account of the Passion of Our Lord and not feeling moved at all. His experience, as he says, was like that of many people who "might believe every article of the Creed, but it does not touch them deeply".

So, in response to this, he sets out two essentials for prayer to be meaningful: the need to set aside space and time for prayer and, here going back to the early church, the need to read and reread all that is said about Jesus in the Gospels. These may seem simple and obvious points but the author makes them with such clarity and insight and supports them with such a wealth of life experiences that they come to one with renewed clarity. Then at the end there is an Addendum containing a most helpful Blueprint for Daily Prayer.

This is, all in all, not only an invaluable guide to the practice of prayer but also a book full of insights into the spiritual life. It is warmly recommended.

John Duddington



A Message from the Newman Association Secretary

Dear Members of the Newman Association,

After the June AGM I will have served four years as Secretary of the Newman Association Council and am committed to stepping down, so the Association will need a replacement. We would like to identify members who would naturally like to know more about the role before considering applying.

The Secretary has a key role in the Association with three main roles:

1. Being the point of contact between the outside world and the Association and between members of the Association/Circles and Council. Email is the normal form of contact, with the occasional letter/telephone call. The frequency of the work is essentially of a weekly (rather than daily) basis.
2. Preparing agendas and circulating other papers for Council meetings. Council intends the minutes of the Council meetings to be handled by a minutes Secretary. Council meetings are held about four times a year, plus at the AGM. Currently Council meets in London, though it can decide to meet elsewhere to suit members' convenience. Expenses to attend all Council Meetings are paid.
3. Preparing the Agenda for the AGM each year, and, after the AGM, organising with the Treasurer the sending of the annual report and accounts to Companies House and the Charities Commission. If the new Constitution is passed at the 2020 AGM, we will need to report only to the Charities Commission.

If you would like to hear more, and/or would like to attend a Council meeting before committing to make a formal application, please do let me know by emailing me at secretary@newman.org.uk.

With every good wish and blessing,

Brian Hamill

Newman Association Secretary

December 2019



Brian Hamill (right) at a recent annual general meeting



A note on Edward P Echlin

A few months ago Edward Echlin sent in the following contribution to *The Newman*. Sadly, it has turned out to be a final statement of his lifetime commitment to Christian ecology because he died on December 23rd only three weeks short of his 90th birthday. Born in Michigan in the United States and brought up there he lived for much of his later life in the UK, first in Yorkshire and more recently in Bexhill where he became a key member of the Newman

Association's Eastbourne & Bexhill Circle. He was at one time chairman of the Circle and until recently he was the Programmes Officer. He was married for 45 years to Barbara, who survives him.

Edward's long life included serious twists and turns. He became a Jesuit novice at Cincinnati in 1948 and remained in the Society of Jesus for 25 years. By the early 1970s he was a lecturer at theological colleges in England. He left the Jesuits in order, he said, "to continue my work as a Catholic theologian in the midst of God's pilgrim people." He married in 1974, after which he and Barbara both became heavily involved in Green Christian organisations and in organic gardening.

Their move to Bexhill on the South Coast brought him close to Hastings and a curious historical link to the Jesuits which Edward outlined in an article for the January 2012 issue of *The Newman*. Driven out of France at the beginning of the 20th century the French Jesuits established a theological centre in Hastings between 1902 and 1926. Perhaps the most famous of the students at Ore Place, Hastings, was Pierre Teilhard de Chardin who later went on, through books such as *The Phenomenon of Man*, to become one of the greatest reconcilers of religion and science. Edward Echlin greatly admired Teilhard de Chardin, regarding him as "a cosmic mystic and a prophetic, poetic genius burning to express his intuitions about a living, thrusting universe".

An extended letter to the Editor by Edward P. Echlin Being a Christian Today

The Church is in a new situation today, certainly unprecedented in my lifetime. We no longer live in a context of respect for biodiversity, soil fertility, equable climate, and healthy rivers and seas. The (alarmist) news media reports daily on looming crises, especially a worldwide food shortage and life-threatening climate breakdown. Politicians speak insultingly to and about each other, encouraging militarism and homelessness, most noticeably in Turkey and Syria.

Above all there is obsession with a so-called Brexit, a departure from values of shared community with, and care for people, of other countries and cultures, including people of other religions and even fellow Christians. In brief, we live in an unhappy time when even people of faith hesitate to share concerns and resources and community with contemporaries confronted with climate breakdown and warfare.

This is a concise picture of the worshipping context in which we now live and practise

as Christians. There should be a concerned response by practising Christians and Christian communities. In the spirit of our new Saint John Henry Newman we can, and should, respond to this widespread suffering. God is present in suffering and in hope, as Newman wrote: "One day the lights of heaven *will* be signs: one day the affairs of nations also *will* be signs; why, then, is it superstitious to look towards them? It may show our ignorance in doing so; but there is nothing ridiculous or contemptible in our ignorance, and there is much that is religious in our watching. It is better to be wrong in our watching than not to watch at all."¹

The first thing to recognise is that, as baptised Christians, we are different; we are a blessing and a challenge within the wide and suffering earth community. We are in a real sense God's people within a suffering world, with special gifts to share with fellow creatures. We are surrounded by hunger and other necessities in a time when community should flourish. As baptised into Christ, Jesus incarnate in the world today, we are endowed with gifts of service to suffering contemporaries. We can and should form local Christian communities serving fellow creatures wherever we live.

As Ignatius Loyola wrote in his compelling *Contemplation for Obtaining Divine Love*, in the beautiful translation of Thomas Corbishley: "Take, Lord, into Your possession, my complete freedom of action my memory, my understanding and my entire will, all that I have, all that I won: it is Your gift to me, I now return it to You. It is all Yours, to be used simply as You wish. Give me Your Love and Your grace; it is all I need."²

In the remainder of this article I hope to suggest some of the ways Jesus became flesh



among us and dwells as the beginning of God's kingdom today. Jesus entered our world as a Suffering Servant. He founded, and left behind, and still lives within a Christian community dedicated to today's suffering world. We are Jesus as community in this suffering and confused time.

We live at a time when human monies have almost replaced God as the goal and source of life on earth. Famously in the fourth century St Ambrose of Milan wrote in words that seem familiar today: "The world has been created for everyone's use. But you few rich are trying to keep it for yourselves. For not only the possession of the earth but the sky, the sea, and the air are claimed by the rich few." Similarly, in our time, the Swedish teenage prophet Greta Thunberg repeats Ambrose's thoughts in today's context of deadly climate change when what is called "Extinction Rebellion" is

around and fashionable. "This is all wrong", she said at a recent climate action meeting

1 *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, Rivingtons, London, 1928. P. 238

2 *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, Thomas Corbishley, S.J. trans., Anthony Clarke, Wheathampstead, 1963.

at the United Nations in New York dedicated to our response on climate change. "I should not even be here – I should be in school on the other side of the ocean."

Seldom before have so many people been aware of human dependence on an equitable climate. So important is climate change, and its deadly effect on our lives, that climate has become a regular – and sometimes welcome – story in our daily press. People are recognising that living creatures depend on a balanced climate for our very survival. Christians are also recognising that we Christians have a special responsible role in contemporary climate care. By planting an apple tree near our church buildings, we witness not only to the importance of the inclusiveness of the Incarnation, but also the influence of Christian Eucharists on our climate

Serving other creatures

As far as I know, no other planet is populated by thinking people capable of growing food and building shelters for themselves and other people. As such we are responsible, with God our Creator, to serve other creatures. We form joyful communities of "faith, hope, love and service" among those with whom we share this unique planet earth. We are Jesus Christ's followers as servants within our communities, Christ existing as community as we are described by thoughtful writers. Our buildings everywhere – which are called churches – are reminders of our presence and hopes.

Christian people gathered in these churches soon began to serve our needy contemporaries who may not even have heard of God the Servant in God's Son Jesus Christ. Led by women and men ministers we live to serve, especially where people are hungry, sick, unlearned, or in need of shelter, all of which we can and do provide for in ways large and small. As I mentioned, near our buildings, where Mass is celebrated and baptisms take place, we can plant an apple tree as a companionable symbol of the wider meaning of God's incarnation on Planet Earth. In other words, we witness that God became flesh in the human Jesus centuries ago, including in that interdependent flesh the rest of the soil community in which human flesh exists and serves.

God became flesh in our world when Judaism and Rome were powerful, as John's Gospel indicates in his descriptions of the Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate. In this same world where Jesus lived and served while here, and in which he was executed, we now live and serve as parents, teachers, traders, technicians, students and countless other roles in our teeming cities. It is important that we remember that we are Jesus present as community today and it is through us that he serves.

Joining the Jesuits

When in my late teens I left home and joined the Jesuits, I used to enjoy fruit harvests in our own local orchard which included Bramleys. When now I eat a delicious cooked Bramley I remember the story of the little girl called Maryanne who planted an apple pip in the back garden of her terraced house in Southwell, near the Cathedral. That pip developed into the original Bramley apple tree, named after a later occupant of the house.

I once visited the terraced house and saw the original tree had fallen to the ground, but one of the branches had grown upwards to form a new large fruitful Bramley apple tree. I came away with a bag of apples kindly given to me by the owner of the tree. I

also visited and enjoyed harvests from the orchard at the Yorkshire Benedictine Abbey of Ampleforth. Through religious houses, with their traditional orchards, apples are prime educators and encouragers of holistic spirituality. I try to share their wisdom as an eco-theologian.

As the presence on earth today of the human, rural Jesus we are responsible for a world with a damaged climate. We can and do support numerous caring groups like Green Christian, Friends of the Earth, CPRE, the Woodland Trust, and more locally, those such as Rother Environmental Group and Bexhill Environmental Groups in my own area. As the cosmic Christ today we include other earth creatures in what we are and do. We are especially concerned to heal and promote healthy life supporting climate. Trees are special friends of good climate, and, with their seeds, exist to feed other living creatures (Gn. 1.3) Together we serve an inclusive earth community As Pope Francis says: "One day we will be all animals again in the eternity of Christ. Paradise is open to all God's creatures".

As in our earth suffering from human-induced climate disruption, as we become included in the Incarnation God is related to all fellow earth creatures. We especially



Bramley apples from the Editor's bumper harvest for 2019

witness to this beautiful and climate-friendly reality by planting apple trees near where we celebrate the Eucharist, bringing God to earth again in bread and wine. Bread and wine include the whole earth community with which we infleshed humans are related and interdependent. Significantly, God on a tree is our pre-eminent symbol influencing even the very shape of our churches. In Joyce Kilmer's words concluding his beautiful and famous poem: "His crown of thorns is twined

with every thorn. His cross is every tree".

Our communication, infleshed among us today, is to preserve memories of Jesus friend and supporter of good climate. I conclude with some suggestions through which we, as Christians, can be special climate friends.

Suggestions for church grounds

A garden pond – if it is possible to find water.

Well-managed grounds

A wildlife "corner"

Bird feeders

A butterfly feeder

A bird house

Tidy well-managed footpaths in the grounds

An area for the burial of ashes marked as are traditional areas for bodies; include a crucifix

A few trees if there is space

Lastly, offer the neighbours the opportunity to use room in our buildings for meetings

Edward Echlin was a member of the Eastbourne and Bexhill Circle

Christianity and the Earth Community

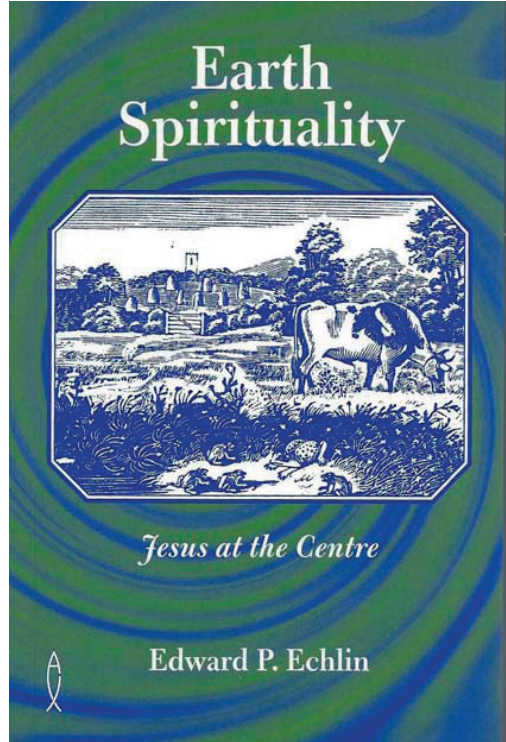
One spring day Edward Echlin sat on the Mount of Olives. He noticed a wide variety of birds and the sheep grazing beneath the trees. He related this to the passage in Luke's Gospel in which Jesus is described as staying at night on the Mount of Olives after teaching in the temple. This brought alive to Edward Echlin the sayings of Jesus about birds and sheep and other wildlife.

With imagination, he could place himself in hilly Nazareth, with its few hundred families and their sheep and goats, oxen, cattle and donkeys. He imagined the growing Jesus learning about the useful elder trees, the scattered tabor oaks and aleppo pines, the nettle, bramble and mallow and the startling yellow chrysanthemums of April. Here in the olive groves was that startling biodiverse world of the psalms, prophets, Genesis and the rabbis.

Sheep symbolism pervades the Christian story. There were shepherds and sheep in Luke's nativity story. The shepherd metaphor for Jesus has priestly and kingly associations; the Shepherd King, as a biblical ideal, was to rule with compassion and wisdom, his justice including hills, fields and weather – in a word, soil fertility.

Beyond our planet there may exist a plurality of worlds, whole thinking kingdoms, some with lives of unexpected shapes and forms and complexities. The possibility of aliens out there, of strangers to us, should be for us not a source of anxiety, much less of earth abuse, but of wonder at what God has done for ourselves and our earth in Jesus. Jesus, God's personal Wisdom incarnate, fills all worlds of life wherever they may be.

These are a few observations from Edward Echlin's book Earth Spirituality: Jesus at the Centre, published in 1999 by John Hunt Publishing. B.R.



Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir

With a reputation for "presenting by far the best material in by far the worst manner" I am discouraged from writing an article for you by the lack of interest in the "best material" I have to offer, for what can be "shown" by interpreting a few diagrams clogs up minds when translated into thousands of words unfamiliar to those with the mainly literary and professional backgrounds of today's members. As a topic it would have been more appropriate for the old Philosophy of Science group. Yet the fact is, Newman wanted an educated, not a narrowly trained, laity worthy of consultation on matters of doctrine. We should be aspiring to be teachers, not just students willing to listen to experts.

St Paul speaks to the problem in 1 Cor 14:1-4: "Make love your aim; but be eager, too, for spiritual gifts, and especially for prophesying. Those who speak in a tongue speak to God, but not to other people, because no-one understands them; they are speaking in the Spirit and the meaning is hidden. On the other hand, someone who prophesies speaks to other people, building them up and giving them comfort and reassurance".

So what should we understand by "prophesying" today? How can those who speak in tongues "interpret what they say so the church is built up by it"? In a nutshell, I want to suggest that scientific prediction of possibilities is today's attempt at prophecy, and structural or flow diagrams the means by which its invisible meanings can be revealed.

A hundred years after Newman's conversion, the circuit diagrams of communications science became particularly relevant to becoming able to understand ourselves, society and Christianity: the religion of the Word. Unfortunately science, misled by the successes of Isaac Newton, took a wrong (materialist) turn, so that Information Science is still seen as Information Technology and the Marxist and post-Leo XIII Catholic critiques of Capitalist inhumanity propose conflicting outcomes: Revolutions by combined Force or of our own Spirits.

The Catholic line since Leo has been that it is the clergy's job to point out problems and principles, the laity's to find solutions applicable in their own circumstances. That, anyway, is the vocation I have been following when as a layman I have been studying the roots of today's environmental and social crisis in philosophy of science and the misuse of money in our economy. Christ's promise has been kept. I've sought solutions and found them, using flow diagrams. Derive matter from energy, the logic of evolution from that, and the meaning of "money" from a credit rather than a debit card type system.

Would any circle find a diagrammatic explanation of this to be of interest? Doesn't it sound as though it would be worth teaching? And surely I am not the only one of us who has his own Christian story to tell? How reassuring it would be to get to know each other's.

St John Henry Newman, thank you for your courageous Apologia, which helped sustain this work against misrepresentation. Please join in our prayers for its fruitful outcome.

Yours sincerely

Dave Taylor, Worcester Circle

Circle Programmes

ALL Circles

London & SE Circles

Birmingham

Contact: Winifred Flanagan, winifredflanagan@gmail.com

Cleveland

Contact: Judith Brown, 01642 814977, browns01@globalnet.co.uk

19 January New Year Lunch

19 February University Chaplaincy: is it really necessary?

Fr Marc Lyden-Smith and Mary Palmer

18 March

"Your Word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path" Psalm 118
verse 105. God speaks to me in his Word. How can I turn my ear to the
sound of his voice?

Mgr Pat Kilgariff

Coventry

Contact: Colin Roberts cjroberts08@talktalk.net

11 January

New Year Mass and Party

19 January

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity service in the Chapel of Unity at
Coventry Cathedral

1 February

Newman Reading Group

25 February

ARCIC III

Archbishop Bernard Longley

7 March

Day of recollection led by

Fr. Bernard McDermott

24 March

Five sonnets of Gerard Manley Hopkins

Mgr. Pat Kilgariff

Ealing

Contact: Kevin Clarke Kevin.Clarke@keme.co.uk

23 January

Young Adult attitudes towards religious belief and the Church

Martin Bennett

20 February

A contrasting take on young adult attitudes towards religious belief

Dr Karen North

19 March

Catholic teaching and its effectiveness for purpose

Professor Anthony Towey

Eastbourne & Bexhill

Contact: John Camody, 01323 726334, johnmh22@outlook.com

Edinburgh

Contact: Lyn Cronin, lyncronin@btinternet.com

Glasgow

Contact: Arthur McLay, mclay@btinternet.com

30 January

The Ethical Dimension of Educational Provision and Research

Professor Lindsay Paterson

27 February

Reconsidering Catholic Experiences in Britain's Expanding Atlantic Empire,
1600- 1750

Dr Scott Spurlock

26 March

The Flawed Small Print in the Catholic Christening Contract

Professor Mary McAleese, Past President of Ireland 1997-2011

Hertfordshire

Contact: Priscilla O'Reilly, 01727 864404, peor738@gmail.com

18 January

How the Church serves the LGBT+ Community

Mgr Keith Bartlop

20 January

Newman Book Club

16 February

A History of Hymns

John Ainslie

21 March

Quiet Day led by

Mgr Vladimir Felzman

18th April

Circle AGM then talk on Caritas' SEIDS Enterprise Hub

Dr. John Coleby

London

Contact: Patricia, 0208 504 2017

Manchester & N. Cheshire Contact: Chris Quirke, 0161 941 1707 dcq@mac.com

North Gloucestershire Contact: Stephanie Jamison, 01242 539810, sjamison@irlen-sw.com

4 February Wounded Shepherd and Pope Francis' Vision of the Church
Austen Ivereigh

3 March The Digital World: To fear or to embrace? *James Abbott*

7 April Ecclesiological Society *Adrian Barlow*

North Merseyside Contact: John Potts, john_potts41@hotmail.com

16 January Homelessness *Hettie Miles*

20 February - An Introduction to Canon Law -Fr John Poland

15 March Visit to Church of Our Lady and St. Nicholas (Liverpool Parish Church)

19 March The Pastoral Associates' Role *Fr. Matthew Nunes*

Surrey Hills Contact: Deirdre Waddington, deidre@dwarehouse.co.uk

Swansea Contact: Prof Mike Sheehan, m.sheehan@swansea.ac.uk

Tyneside Contact: Terry Wright, terry.wright@newcastle.ac.uk

29 January Good Without God? Iris Murdoch in "The Philosopher's Pupil"
Gary Leece

25 March Learning to Walk Together on the Way: Receptive Ecumenism, ARCIC III
and Pope Francis's Call for a Fully Synodal Church *Paul Murray*

Wimbledon Contact: Bill Russell, 0208 946 4265, william_russell@talktalk.net

Worcester Contact: Heather Down, 01905 21535, hcdown@gmail.com

6 February TBA *The Rt Revd Dr John Inge, Bishop of Worcester*

20 February Annual General Meeting

19 March Our Calling – Methodism within the Christian Family *Revd Helen Caine*

Wrexham Contact: Maureen Thomas, maureenthomas@uwclub.net

31 January The God who speaks *Rt Rev Peter Brignall, Bishop of Wrexham*

York Contact: Judith Smeaton, 01904 704525, judith.smeaton@btinternet.com